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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/809,901	03/26/2004	Hiraku Murayama	018961-068	7688

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EXAMINER

HOEKSTRA, JEFFREY GERBEN

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

3736

DATE MAILED: 12/05/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/809,901

Applicant(s)

MURAYAMA ET AL.

Examiner

Jeffrey G. Hoekstra

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 25 September 2006.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-4 and 7-11 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-4 and 7-11 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Notice of Amendment

1. In response to the amendment filed on 09/25/2006, amended claim(s) 1, 2, 8, and 9, canceled claim(s) 5 and 6, and new claim(s) 10 and 11 is/are acknowledged. The current rejections of the claim(s) 1-4 and 7-9 is/are *withdrawn*. The following new and reiterated grounds of rejection are set forth:

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

2. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent, or on an international application by another who has fulfilled the requirements of paragraphs (1), (2), and (4) of section 371(c) of this title before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent.

The changes made to 35 U.S.C. 102(e) by the American Inventors Protection Act of 1999 (AIPA) and the Intellectual Property and High Technology Technical Amendments Act of 2002 do not apply when the reference is a U.S. patent resulting directly or indirectly from an international application filed before November 29, 2000. Therefore, the prior art date of the reference is determined under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) prior to the amendment by the AIPA (pre-AIPA 35 U.S.C. 102(e)).

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3. Claims 1-4, 8, and 10-11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Fariabi (US 6,482,166 B1). Fariabi discloses a composite guidewire (10 and 30), comprising:

- a distal end portion (17 and 31) and a main body portion (element 25 and the proximal portion on the left-hand side of Figure 1);
- wherein said main body portion comprises: (a) a center layer (13 and 37) formed of a first material (the Ni-Ti based alloy positively recited in column 4 lines 64-67 and column 5 lines 18-22 with a rigidity of ~90 ksi), (b) a surface layer formed of a second, more rigid material (elements 12 and 36 comprising the high strength Co-Ni-Cr alloy positively recited in column 4 line 64 – column 5 line 25 with a rigidity of ~300 ksi), and (c) an intermediate layer, the composite region between said center and surface layers formed by heat treatment (column 5 line 49 – column 6 line 4), formed of a mixture of said first material and said second material (column 2 lines 59-63);
- wherein said main body portion has a structure in which said center layer, said intermediate layer, said surface layer are structurally disposed in this order from a center of said main body portion toward an exterior of said main body portion as best seen in Figures 1 and 2;
- wherein said distal end portion is formed of said first material, and is continuous with the center layer of said main body portion as best seen in Figures 1 and 2; and
- said guidewire further comprising: an intermediate portion (the taper between main body portion and said distal end portion) formed of the mixture of said first material

and said second material, wherein (d) mixture is decreased in the content of said first material toward said surface layer and increased in the content of said second material toward said surface layer (column 2 lines 59-63 and column 5 line 49 – column 6 line 4) such that a compositional gradually increasing gradient is formed in a radial direction, (e) said intermediate portion comprises a center layer formed of said first material as seen in Figures 1 and 2, and (f) a surface layer formed of a mixture of said first material and said second material covers said center layer (column 2 lines 59-63 and column 5 line 49 – column 6 line 4).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

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6. Claims 7 and 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Fariabi in view of Eder et al (US 6,488,637 B1).

7. Fariabi discloses the claimed invention except for explicitly disclosing the second, more rigid metallic material is stainless steel. Eder et al teaches a composite guidewire (140) comprising an inner super-elastic alloy core (150 and 152) and outer stainless steel covering (148 and 154) (column 4 lines 55-67). It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the composite guidewire as taught by Fariabi, with the materials as taught by Eder et al for the purpose of configuring the mechanical properties of a guidewire to increase patient safety during advanced medical procedures utilizing guidewires traversing tortuous vasculature.

Response to Arguments

8. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-4 and 7-11 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

9. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.


Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Jeffrey G. Hoekstra whose telephone number is (571)272-7232. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. EST.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Max F. Hindenburg can be reached on (571)272-4726. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

JH



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